

KIT BAG

Our pick of the latest kit, best value buys and brightest new ideas

VIPER-FLEX STYX PRO

The Danes are famous for many great things, great dogs, great pastries, and if you're a rifle shooter, great quad sticks, with the Viper-Flex Quads being the prime example. They are much loved by deer stalkers around the globe and indeed throughout the pages of RS. A huge number of our regular contributors are massive Viper-Flex fans and you'll see the name dropped countless times as they recount their adventures in print.

So why are Viper-Flex sticks so revered? It's really a combination of great design and exceptional durability. To be honest there's nothing particularly unique about the design itself, it's really the fine details and legendary longevity of the Vipers that make them many a serious stalkers first choice.

The Journey model was the first carbon-fibre variant of the Vipers. Tubed black anodised aluminium



PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL AUSTIN

ABOVE: The latest incarnation of the all-conquering Viper-Flex quads

BELOW: The new rubberised covers are a big improvement and the extra leg delivers amazing accuracy

Is there something you want tested?

SEND SUGGESTIONS TO: editorial@rifleshootermagazine.co.uk



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Viper-Flex
www.viper-flex.com
for your nearest UK
supplier

RRP
£330

sections top and bottom sandwiched a carbon-fibre central section on each leg. Lightweight and collapsible, old and new models can both be disassembled and stored in the supplied bag.

Their successors are now an all-carbon affair and notably lighter because of it. The tube diameter has also dropped from a maximum of 20mm on the Journey to 18mm on the Styx Pro, which again adds to the weight reduction, but crucially that all-important stiffness is still there.

The old plastic sleeves that clipped on to each leg to avoid whistling in the wind have also been replaced with rubber sleeves, which are a huge improvement and make the Styx Pro much easier to adjust quickly and quietly, and grippier to carry.

To be honest I never broke the Journey model down for local trips, as it was a pain pushing buttons and twisting the plastic sleeves. The rubber sleeves make the Pro Styx considerably more portable and more easily adjusted for sitting or kneeling, but to be honest that's something you're unlikely to do in the field.

The yoke and rear rest are identical to the earlier version, as is the switchable lever that's used to help deploy the legs. Stretching up to 2.10m, they'll fit pretty much anyone. I'm about 6' 4" and there's plenty of adjustment for me. With a basic weight of 850g, they've slimmed down considerably from the 1,050g of their predecessors.

For me the optional extra leg (as shown in the pics) is a must. With it in use you have the most stable standing shooting platform on the market. I regularly use mine to zero a rifle if there's a need to generate a little more backstop. Add the extra leg and the Viper-Flex Styx Pro are not far short of a bench for zeroing and if you need to really reach out on occasion the Vipers are the best way to do it if there's no way to go prone.

I'm a big fan of the Blaser quad sticks and their innovative panning pistol grip. They're very fast to deploy and adjust, lightweight and perfect for woodland stalking. But they don't have the extra leg option, so the Vipers definitely take the top spot for zeroing in the field and extreme long-range shooting. Many would argue that the best just got better.

KEY FEATURES

- A wide front ensures a 20m wide coverage area at 100m distance, without having to move the stick
- The rubber feet are designed to be used on hard, smooth and soft surfaces
- Rubberised legs reduce noise and ensure better grip and handling
- Suitable for shooters up to 2.10m
- Shortest length (retracted) 110cm
- Easy and quick height adjustment
- Can be transported in a weapons case next to your gun
- Low weight at 850g